

# Praxis

\*(prak'sis) *n.*, 1. Practical application or exercise of a body of knowledge.

November 2007

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## Pueblo de Dios



Pueblo de Dios, a mission start of this synod, hosted a Block Party in San Jose in October with live music featuring the Teen Challenge youth choir, Pueblo de Dios children's choir and some awesome dancers! Families enjoyed many fun attractions such as: story telling by Tala, face painting, ping pong for a little exercise, a jumper, tasty food (cotton candy, popcorn, hotdogs and hamburgers), raffles with prizes for all ages, and of course, a piñata.

We were honored and blessed to have some of the many sponsors attend that help support this community event, such as City Team and Harvest Ministries. The event was so satisfying, knowing that we are relating to the city and the needs and interests of neighborhood people. We have already been asked about next year's "Block Party!"

Pastor Joseph Leon

Our mission continues:  
Transforming Lives and making disciples for  
Christ

**(More pictures inside on page 5)**

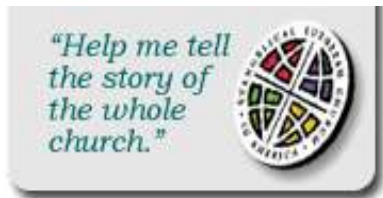
# Stewardship

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## Pr Bud Egdahl

Read Bits from Bud in the weekly Byte of Synod. Not a subscriber? Send a note to [info@spselca.org](mailto:info@spselca.org)



## Stories of the church to Share



## CLU Honors Pr Egdahl

“Our Bud” holds the Christus Award presented to him for his many years of support of the school. Daughters Mary and Alice and their families joined the celebration.

## ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

Sometimes we ask a question, not because we are looking for an answer – but because we have already decided on an answer, and the question is a way of making a statement.

How many times, when deciding on Mission Support dollars for Synod and Churchwide, have we heard the question: “What are we getting from the Synod?” Or, “What are they doing for us?”

Now, that is a legitimate question if you really want to know the answer. And the answer will be full and long – more than the room I have in this column.

But when the question is really a way of saying “I see no reason for us to be giving Mission Support dollars for the work of the Synod, or the Churchwide expressions of the ELCA,” then you are really asking the **WRONG** question.

The right question would be “What are *we* accomplishing through the work that the agencies and institutions are doing which our Mission Support dollars make possible?” Or “How are we making a difference in the world in our partnerships with the Synod and the Churchwide (read: worldwide) mission we are a part of with our Mission Support dollars?”

When my congregation asks me to indicate the dollars I intend to give in thanks to God, and for the work of the congregation, I do not ask: “How much am I getting from the youth work? What is the children’s Sunday School doing for me?”

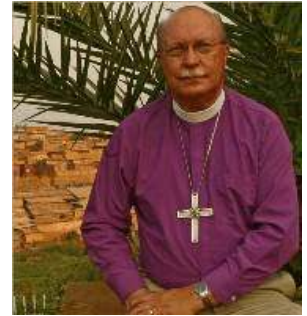
Rather, I take joy in seeing what others are able to do in Christ’s mission because of the gifts all members give, including my own.

It’s budget setting time for most congregations. That means it is a time also to determine what percentage of all of our unrestricted income for the coming year we will designate to have a part in God’s mission across the territory of our Synod and around the world through our Churchwide work.

The question is not “What’s in it for us?”, but “What can we be doing in it?” There is joy down that path!

### Saints: Real Characters

In the All Saints' Day prayer, we ask God to “grant us grace to follow the blessed saints in lives of faith and commitment.” While we know that the “blessed saints” really means all Christians who have remained faithful to the covenant God made with them in their baptisms, we also know that some of the saints are remembered by the church as outstanding representatives of the faith.



To be truthful at this point, as “faith and commitment” formed their “saintly” characters, some of them turned into real characters—and perhaps not the easiest people to be around. They were almost always controversial, and not necessarily “saintly” in their day.

Simon Stylites spent decades perched atop a pillar in his bizarre faithfulness to Christ. St. Francis renounced his wealth and lived as a wandering monk, a fool for Christ, challenging the status quo, calling for repentance, and in the process offended many people. More recently Mother Teresa astonished the world with her commitment and compassion to the poor. And now we have learned of the emptiness she lived with most of her life, something that troubled her and erodes the false image of a saint as one who lives constantly conscious of the (blissful?) presence of God.

And when God granted Luther the grace to live a life of faith and commitment, his frequently blunt style and teaching meant trouble for the church and for Europe as eventually the religious wars broke out. Martin Luther King, Jr became the emblematic leader of the civil rights movement, which he never saw as simply a political movement, but by God's grace, a matter of faith and commitment to gospel justice that turned him into a prophet for the nation, if not the world.

Over the nearly four decades of my ministry never have I known any perfect Christians. (To be sure, I have know some who thought they were perfect, but that's another story.) But I have known many real characters, Christians who had been formed by grace into “troublemakers” in the cause of Christ, or into odd and/or examples of what faith might look like, refracted through obviously broken, flawed humanity.

Think for a moment about the characters you have known in the church—both lay and clergy! Since Christ has set us free, let us consider that such freedom in some of our sisters and brothers of the faith, if not in us, means a kind of Christian quirkiness. Let us grant that other Christians do not and should not be just like us. Let us celebrate faith and commitment whenever we see it. If and when we find ourselves aggravated by certain other Christians, let us at least consider that they may well be living in a grace-given, Spirit-formed faith and commitment and maybe we ought to pay attention!

“For all the saints...” we praise and thank God—even for the saints who in our view are real characters!

+ David G. Mullen

## Listening Posts

### Leadership Discipling Team

*Chair*  
Pr Nancy Nelson

*District A*  
Ms Rowena Henry, DM

*District B*  
Pr Mary Lou Petitjean

*District C*  
Dr Margaret McLean

*District D*  
Vacant

*District E*  
Mr Nick Droge

*At Large*  
Pr Mark Holmerud

For much of our time over the last few years, the work of the Leadership Discipling Team (LDT) has focused on the designing, offering and compiling data from Listening Posts. What was a Listening Post? -- a day long event intended for rostered leaders of our synod. It was designed to provide a safe place to talk about life – in ministry, in family, in community. We offered five such events and now a summary is available. It first went out to the Synod Council in September and is now posted on our SPS website. ([www.spselca.org](http://www.spselca.org) , scroll down to Listening Post Summary) We invite and encourage everyone to take a few minutes to look at the report and especially, to spend time considering the issues surfaced via these events. We believe the report is one source of information to consider as we look to our synod's future plans.

We hoped these events would give our team some direction in terms of future plans, and we were not disappointed. Future plans for the LDT include helping pastors form facilitated groups of their choosing; encouraging and facilitating a sabbatical planning process (with pastors and lay people); developing and using a mutual ministry committee; We look forward to the future as we develop those possibilities.

One of the projects that is beginning right away is that of developing a list of resources for pastors, AiMs, and diaconal ministers developed from recommendations from that same group. Are you a rostered leader or family member who uses/has used a spiritual director who was just wonderful? Do you know a counselor who has the ability and sensitivity to work with and understand the issues pastoral professionals face? Is there a retreat center that has been particularly helpful in vocational and personal discernment? If you are a rostered professional or know one who has found support, care, and/or help from a particular person or agency, we'd like to know about it. We will pull the list together and offer it back out for use. We won't be able to research the offerings or make recommendations, but we can certainly compile the list and make it available. If you have names, please send them to us at [listeningpost@sbcglobal.net](mailto:listeningpost@sbcglobal.net) . Thanks.

May God bless all our ministries as members of the priesthood of believers.

Nancy Feniuk Nelson,  
LDT Chair



# Congregations

## Pueblo de Dios- San Jose, Welcomes Neighbors to the Block Party!



*(All Photos by Donna Black)*

Games, food, great weather –all came together for a festive day. Our goals were to reach out to the community in a way that people meet and interact with each other and also to be able to share the gospel with them. That happened – praise and thanks be to God!

### From the ELCA:

#### A Social Statement on Education

“Our Calling in Education” was adopted as amended by the 2007 Churchwide Assembly by a vote of 949-35.

The text of the social statement appears by clicking on the link below and may be downloaded for the information and use of interested individuals, congregations, synods, and other organizations affiliated with the ELCA and may be copied for local use.

The text of Our Calling and Education and its Implementing Resolutions will be prepared for printing during the Fall of 2007. The Church in Society program unit expects that printed copies will be ready for distribution some time in January of 2008. A Spanish translation will also be prepared and the unit expects it to be ready for distribution later in 2008.

[Our Calling in Education](#)

#### Kyros Ministry

An ecumenical ministry which provides education and training for church leaders and communities. Workshops are held in various locations throughout our synod. Training in Maintaining Professional Boundaries and also in Protecting God’s Children. We recommend all clergy and rostered leaders attend the Boundaries workshop. Staff and all volunteers members who work with children the training in Protecting God’s Children. More information at [www.kyros.org](http://www.kyros.org)



#### Fire in the Southland

The ELCA, through Lutheran Disaster Response, is assessing the needs in southern California after several days of severe wildfires and the evacuation of hundreds of thousand of residents .

For appropriate worship resources about the wildfires, including prayer litanies, petitions, and hymn suggestions, go to

1. [www.elca.org/worship](http://www.elca.org/worship).

A reproducible bulletin insert for this particular response is available at: [www.elca.org/disaster/includes/disaster\\_10-07.pdf](http://www.elca.org/disaster/includes/disaster_10-07.pdf)

#### Word & Sacrament Discipling Team

“Equipping Believers for Baptismal Living” that is the charge of this active Team.

Exciting events and resources are constantly r happening, or are in the planning stages by this busy team. To learn more news you can use, visit [www.wordandsacrament.org](http://www.wordandsacrament.org)

# Around the Synod

## We Pray

for Lynn Carlson(wife of Pr Chuck Carlson) at the death of her father in October; in thanksgiving for the birth of Spenser Joseph Bengston in October–grandparents are Pr Carl and Joan Bengston; for healing for retired Pr Ralph Herman, recovering from a severe virus.

( We welcome prayer requests–please be sure to secure permission from those you wish to have included in this public space)

Send prayer requests to [info@spselca.org](mailto:info@spselca.org)

## Roster Changes

Allen Dunn, to Ascension, Citrus Heights, (Assoc)

Charles Carlson, on leave from Call

Derek Enkfelt, Our Savior, Santa Clara

Trudy Franzen, American, Woodland, (Assoc)

Holly McHale-Larsen, Our Savior, Lafayette, (Assoc)

Scott Minke, on leave from call

Meghan Sobocienski, CORE , Hayward  
(Community Organizer) Diaconal Minister

## Congregations in Transition

**K**ey: (1) Forming Call Committee, (2) Developing Profile, (3) Interviewing, (4)

Calling

### Congregation

### Interim Pastor

Auberry, Sierra (2)

Citrus Heights, Advent (Associate)(3)

Davis, Belfry Campus Ministry (3)

Elko, Faith (3)

Beverly Jensen

Fairfax, Christ (2)

Terry Hamilton-Poore

Fort Bragg, Trinity (3)

Chris Warner-Carey

Fresno, Immanuel(Associate) (3)

Granite Bay, Resurrection(3)

John Ridenour

Grass Valley, Peace (2) (Associate)

Kerman, Bethany (2)

Kirk Shipley

Lodi, Emanuel (2)

Stan Niemi

Marysville, Faith (1)

Merced, Shepherd of the Valley (2)

Carl Bengston

Millbrae, Calvary (3)

Richard Smith

Modesto, Emanuel(3)

Roger Lee

Palo Alto, First (3)

David Rohrer

Quincy, Our Savior (2)

Ruth Hanusa

Redding, St James (1)

Reno, Holy Cross (1)

Larry Quanbeck

Rio Linda, Calvary(3)

Bruce Johnson

Sacramento, Good Shepherd (2)

Russ Creydt

Sacramento, Our Redeemer (1)

Scott Minke

San Leandro, St James (2)

Ruth Leshner

Saratoga, Immanuel (2)

William Norman

Stockton, Zion (4)

Cindy Beck

Woodland (Associate)(2)

# Synod Calendar

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## November

- 3 Imitate My Heart, Christian Educator' s Event
- 4 Redwood Conference Assembly  
Monterey Bay Conference Assembly
- 7 Interim Pastors-Bay Area
- 8 Interim Pastors-Valley
- 9-10 Women of the ELCA Convention
- 10 Tri-Synod Campus Ministry Board  
Synod Profile Regional Event, Lodi
- 11 Foothill Conference Assembly
- 12 Assembly Planning Committee
- 15 Sacramento Conference Assembly
- 22 Thanksgiving Day
- 23 Office closed
- 27 Sierra Nevada Conference Assembly

## December

- 18 Discipling Team Chairs and Bishop' s Staff
- 24 Christmas Eve, Office closed at noon
- 25 Nativity of Our Lord

## January

- 1 Name of Jesus Day/New Year' s Day (office closed)
- 8-9 Region 1 & 2 Assembly Planning Staff
- 11-12 Candidacy Committee
- 11-13 Bishops Academy
- 12 Rwanda Connection Committee
- 13 Delta Diablo Conference Assembly  
Sierra San Jaquin Conference Assembly
- 16 Deans Meeting
- 17-19 " Leading the Song" event
- 21 Assembly Planning Team
- 25-26 Synod Council

## February

- 6 Ash Wednesday
- 17-19 Clergy/AiMs/Spouses Retreat
- 18 Assembly Planning Team
- 26-28 Region II Staff Retreat

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**Praxis is published monthly (except July) and posted at the web site**

**[www.spselca.org](http://www.spselca.org)**

**by the Sierra Pacific Synod of the ELCA**

**Rev F Noreen Meginness, Editor**

**Rev David G Mullen, Bishop**

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